



IPSAWG

Invasive Plant Species Assessment Working Group

March 8, 2006 Meeting
Benjamin Harrison State Park, Natural Resource Education Center

Attending: Ellen Jacquart (TNC/INPAWS), Lee Casebere (DNP), Ken Collins (NRCS), Wayne Bivens (DFW – Chief of Wildlife), Tom Good (Div. of Rec.), Bob Waltz (Div. of Ent.), Hilary Cox (Leescape Garden Designs), Doug Keller (DFW), Jeff Kiefer (USFWS), Chris Pierce (CAPS)

Agenda:

1. Michigan Letter Discussion –

Ellen handed out two recent publications for discussion. “Pay Attention to Invasive Species” and “A Different Viewpoint on Invasive Plants” by David MacKenzie of Hortech, Inc. were published in The Michigan Landscape in February. He brought up some issues re. IPSAWG’s assessment and invasive plants in general that the group decided we should respond to. Ellen will draft a letter and send by email to IPSAWG for review and editing.

Points to include in the letter: while he makes several very good points regarding the issue of invasive species in horticulture, he suggests that species that spread only vegetatively cannot be invasive. In fact, he notes that the ‘Indiana Invasive Plant Council’ (by which we assume he means IPSAWG) found periwinkle (which spreads only vegetatively in our area) to be non-invasive. We need to point out that we did assess periwinkle but found it to be highly invasive according to our scoring system. There are other examples of vegetative invasives (e.g. Japanese knotweed). He notes that cost/benefit of a particular species needs to be included in the invasiveness assessment. While cost/benefit is an important aspect of addressing the problem of invasive species, it has nothing to do with the actual invasiveness of a species. How invasive a species is based on biology, not economics. He also suggests that cultivars of some species (like burning bush) are not invasive, though this is apparently based simply on his experience, not research. Our position is that cultivars have the same invasiveness as the parent species unless proven otherwise.

Data mgmt –

Ellen handed out copies of a funding opportunity for regional data management on invasive species. Debbie Maurer, chair of the Data Management committee for MIPN sent it out, asking which Midwestern states are interested in being involved in an application for the funds next year. The goal would be to link invasive species databases in the Midwest. Ellen asked for input on what Indiana should do. Bob noted that the IN Academy of Science started an initiative years ago to link biological collection databases, and is using Biosis software as the link between collections. Could it serve as the basic software for invasive data collection, rather than trying to establish a central data management person/agency, which would take a lot of resources. Chris Pierce suggested

that we should consider NAPIS as a potential database for all IN invasive species information. The advantage is an existing database that already has support for data entry and management. At the public website, county-level distribution maps are available. Through Chris' office, more fine-scale maps can be produced. Chris will send us the public website so we can all take a look – he has entered all the IN kudzu information, so maps are available for that.

Updates on Codes of Conduct -

DNR – Lee says the invasive group discussed and decided it needs to be DNR-wide, not division by division. They also recognized that to do that they will need buy-in from executive office. This issue was discussed at a recent meeting of land holding divisions, and Bob noted that the tone of comments from Dir. Hupfer were supportive, but emphasized that the policy should not commit resources that don't pay off. In other words, if you take on an invasive battle, win it. He also made it clear there should be no mandate to take on specific control efforts that commits resources – e.g. 'eradicate all invasive species from state properties in 10 years'. These comments are all in keeping with the intended codes. Lee and Doug are meeting tomorrow to craft codes of conduct, and they will run them by the DNR invasives committee at end of month. Then it will be reviewed internally by the DNR. They may have something to show us by next meeting. There was a discussion on how to prioritize invasive control efforts on a property. Mission of the landowning agency is an important factor, though not the only one, in making those decisions.

NRCS – Ken has discussed with his new boss and there is general agreement on the idea but the format is a problem. Ellen suggested it could be done as an internal memo from the State Conservationist. Ken noted it should include direction to keep a representative from NRCS on IPSAWG. He will work on developing a draft.

USFWS – Jeff checked with regional office – they initially suggested using an MOU format, but that raises the issue of just who is signing the MOU? Ellen will send the draft codes that are completed so far out to the group to use for ideas.

CAPS – Chris will work on developing a draft. He wants to assure that invasive plants are integrated into the CAPS program. His codes would emphasize that CAPS should have a representative on IPSAWG and play a role in providing this information to the public through CAPS outreach efforts.

Updates –

Bob Waltz –

- new sites for EAB in Randolph and Adams and Huntington and Hamilton and Marion Counties. Explained quarantine situation – 'quarantine within a quarantine'. Moving material from infested area within one township into a different township in same county. Lots of issues with disposal of cut material – burning or chipping to one inch eliminates risk. IN policy changed with realization that ½ mile eradication zone may well not be effective, and the many new sites would cost more money than we could conceivably find. IN decided to change policy before new sites were found; science rather than economics was really the driver. Strong opinions on both sides of this policy change. Concern about loss of ash and what may come in after – probably invasive woody species. What can we do? Firewood policies in state; many private campgrounds are prohibiting campers from bringing in firewood. But most of these policies are not very enforceable. All sites found in IN so far established BEFORE quarantine.

- Does this mean quarantine works, or that we cannot detect young populations? Thousands of trap trees (girdled) have been established in IN; ALL new sites found are reported by public, NOT due to trap tree finds.
- Gypsy moth Slow the Spread program – has worked for years to slow spread of gypsy moth. Great program, has used trap information to focus control efforts. Usually \$10 million from Feds; this year cut to \$6 million. States now trying to figure out what can be done with this amount. Program will fold if money is not restored.
 - Dir. Hupfer directed Bob to draft DNR Invasive Species Legislation – the plan is to put authorizing language in DNR statute, then use rulemaking for the details through DNR/Natural Resource Commission. Would be introduced for summer study committee and then into the next legislative session.

Doug Keller –

- Brazilian elodea – DNR is trying to get partnership/support from local community/parks folks to treat Griffy Lake, which has a population of this aquatic invasive (far north of all known sites for the species). While DNR has authority to go in and control, they want to have support and agreement at the local level. Plants have now spread below the dam. The treatment window is the next month or two, so they are hoping for a quick resolution of this to be able to treat this year. Right now, things are not looking hopeful.

Ellen Jacquart –

- After discussion at the last meeting, she emailed Jim Hitz at Taltree Arboretum regarding the sawtooth oak article in their publication. Jim responded very graciously and asked to be added to the email list for IPSAWG.
- Midwest Invasive Plant Network has a brand new publication – “Why Should I Care About Invasive Species?” – and copies were handed around. If you want more, contact Ellen
- We have received \$8,000 from Urban Forest Conservation Fund, \$2,000 from INPAWS, and \$2,000 from Indiana Academy of Science to fund publication of IPSAWG’s rankings and recommendations of invasive species.

Another species to assess?

Given that we’ll be doing a publication on our results in the next year, we need to finish assessing the really important horticulture species. A good discussion ensued on how to do that.

Doug Keller volunteered to take three (or so) of the worst aquatic invaders in the trade (e.g. yellow floating hearts, Brazilian elodea, water chestnut) and assess them with involvement by experts (e.g. Carole Lembi at Purdue) and industry (e.g. Greg Speichert of Water Gardening magazine).

Phil O’Connor and Ken Collins volunteered to assess sawtooth oak. Ellen will send them information she’s collected on the status of the species.

Ellen Jacquart will contact Mike Cline to see if he wants to work together on assessing burning bush and wintercreeper.

Next Meeting:

9:30 am May 10 at Muscatatuck NWR.